

Amendments to the Claims:

Re-write the claims as set forth below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. – 3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously presented) A method of connecting a tubing component to a pipe of an air-conditioning system, comprising:

 providing a tubing component with at least two in-line sections with different external diameters;

 selecting a section of the tubing component with substantially the same diameter as the pipe;

 when the selected section is not at an end of the tubing component, cutting the tubing component in the vicinity of the selected section so that the selected section is at an end of the tubing component;

 providing a set of connection means in a range of sizes;

 selecting a connection means of suitable dimensions for joining to the selected section; and

 joining the selected connection means both to the tubing component at the selected section and to the pipe.

5. (Original) A method according to Claim 4, wherein each connection means comprises a locking ring.

6. – 9. (Cancelled)